IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

Claims 1-13. (Canceled)

Claim 14. (New) An information processing apparatus comprising:

an extraction unit configured to extract a conflict resolution rule from the head of a queue;

a determination unit configured to determine whether or not a predetermined control symbol is included in the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit, wherein the control symbol indicates information on priority of application of the conflict resolution rule over other rules; and

a processing unit configured to, if it is determined by said determination unit that the control symbol is included in the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit, remove the control symbol from the conflict resolution rule and insert the conflict resolution rule from which the control symbol is removed into the end of the queue, and if it is determined by said determination unit that the control symbol is not included in the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit, evaluate the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit.

Claim 15. (New) The apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising an updating unit configured to a user interface of a printer driver based on the evaluation result of the conflict resolution rule by said processing unit.

Claim 16. (New) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said processing unit is configured to, if it is determined in said determination unit that the control symbol is included in the conflict rule extracted by said extraction unit, describe delay information in a status variable, remove the control symbol from the conflict resolution rule and insert the conflict resolution rule from which the control symbol is removed into the end of the queue, and if it is determined by said determination unit that the control symbol is not included in the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit, evaluate the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit after all status variables described therein the delay information are processed.

Claim 17. (New) The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit is further configured to count the number of times that the status variables described therein the delay information are processed, and forcefully evaluate the conflict resolution rule extracted by said extraction unit when the count value exceeds a predetermined number.

Claim 18. (New) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the control symbol is applied to a conflict rule including a temporary status variable.

Claim 19. (New) An information processing method comprising:

an extraction step of extracting a conflict resolution rule from the head of a queue;

a determination step of determining whether or not a predetermined control symbol is included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, wherein the control symbol indicates information on priority of application of the conflict resolution rule over other rules; and

a processing step of, if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, removing the control symbol from the conflict resolution rule and inserting the conflict resolution rule from which the control symbol is removed into the end of the queue, and if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is not included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, evaluating the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step.

Claim 20. (New) The method according to claim 19, further comprising an updating step of a user interface of a printer driver based on the evaluation result of the conflict resolution rule in said processing step.

Claim 21. (New) The method according to claim 19, wherein said processing step, if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is included in the conflict rule extracted in said extraction step, describes delay information in a status variable, removes the control symbol from the conflict resolution rule and inserts the conflict resolution rule from which the control symbol is removed into the end of the queue, and if it is determined in said

determination step that the control symbol is not included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, evaluates the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step after all status variables described therein the delay information are processed.

Claim 22. (New) The method according to claim 21, wherein said processing step further counts the number of times that the status variables described therein the delay information are processed, and forcefully evaluates the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step when the count value exceeds a predetermined number.

Claim 23. (New) The method according to claim 19, wherein the control symbol is applied to a conflict rule including a temporary status variable.

Claim 24. (New) A computer program embodied in a computer-readable medium, for causing a computer to execute an image processing method comprising:

an extraction step of extracting a conflict resolution rule from the head of a queue;

a determination step of determining whether or not a predetermined control symbol is included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, wherein the control symbol indicates information on priority of application of the conflict resolution rule over other rules; and

a processing step of, if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, removing the control symbol from the conflict resolution rule and inserting the conflict resolution rule from

which the control symbol is removed into the end of the queue, and if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is not included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, evaluating the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step.

Claim 25. (New) The program according to claim 24, further comprising an updating step of a user interface of a printer driver based on the evaluation result of the conflict resolution rule in said processing step.

Claim 26. (New) The program according to claim 24, wherein said processing step, if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is included in the conflict rule extracted in said extraction step, describes delay information in a status variable, removes the control symbol from the conflict resolution rule and inserts the conflict resolution rule from which the control symbol is removed into the end of the queue, and if it is determined in said determination step that the control symbol is not included in the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step, evaluates the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step after all status variables described therein the delay information are processed.

Claim 27. (New) The program according to claim 26, wherein said processing step further counts the number of times that the status variables described therein the delay information are processed, and forcefully evaluates the conflict resolution rule extracted in said extraction step when the count value exceeds a predetermined number.

Claim 28. (New) The program according to claim 24, wherein the control symbol is applied to a conflict rule including a temporary status variable.